

OCM 9TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE, 2007

“Rating System of NSA’s”

Keynote Address by

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The Olympic Council of Malaysia has every year since 1999, held an Annual Conference to focus on some area of special interest or concern to all of us in sport. Last year, following concern over the direction that SUKMA was taking, we undertook an urgent review of SUKMA – its philosophy, its objectives, the right strategy to adopt and the roles and responsibilities of the various stakeholders in the sport. All the parties involved came together – the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the National Sports Council, the State Sports Councils, the National Sports Associations and the Olympic Council of Malaysia. Following a healthy debate, we forwarded to the Hon. Minister, recommendations that we thought were urgent and important. As you now know, most of our recommendations were accepted. Changes have been made and we hope to see a better SUKMA, starting next year.

Similarly this year, the same parties – the government and its agencies, the NSA’s and the OCM – are coming together again to focus our attention on another area of interest which if used

wisely will push Malaysian sports a couple of notches higher. We are today going to look at the possibility of establishing a rating system for NSA's. It is a rating system – not a ranking system. It is not a system that ranks NSA's like athletes and teams are ranked especially in the professional circuit. It is a rating system – perhaps similar to the rating system used in hotels. Just like we have 3-star, 4-star and 5-star hotels, we may have – depending on what you come up with – 3-star, 4-star- and 5-star NSA's or even it could take the form of company ratings (eg AAA, A+, etc). This rating system, I believe, should be based on definite measurable criteria and indicators, which you yourself should identify. It should be a system by you for you.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is not our intention to just rate NSA's. The OCM is not in favour of introducing this system for the sake of introducing something new – we do not want to introduce something that will be an end in itself. If this rating system which we hope to establish, just rates you and does nothing more, I am of the opinion, that it will be of little use. This rating system has to be a means to an end.

With definite criteria identified, important indicators agreed upon and an objective system of evaluation established, this new rating system could be a useful tool for self-assessment.

All NSA's will be able to identify their own and their affiliates' strengths and weaknesses. This will then become a useful tool that could be used by all sports bodies planning forward for self-improvement and for capacity building. The system will then have greater meaning and use. This system could also be used for NSA's to rate their affiliates and for State Affiliates to rate their clubs.

And if you decide today to also give weightage to the different evaluation criteria and indicators, you will then be able to not only identify areas of weakness, which you need to attend to but also establish your priorities when you plan to develop strategies for strengthening your organization through re-structuring, re-organizing and re-building. It could also assist OCM in identifying common areas of weaknesses – and thus enable us to find ways to strengthen these weaknesses.

In today's fast-paced world of sports, with everyone hungering progress, only by intelligent, purposeful and constant use of these evaluation tools can we hope to maintain our standards, let alone elevate it. As someone said, "today we have to run to remain on the spot".

With this in mind, Datuk Dr M Jegathesan, our Deputy President and Chairman of the Organizing Committee for this Conference, has with his team, put together an interesting and challenging programme for you. First, we have with us here today, a special guest speaker, Mr Hallam Pereira from Western Australia. Most of you are familiar with him. He has for the last few years, been helping the Malaysian government as a sports consultant. This morning Mr Pereira is going to show us a similar system that is used in Australia. He will explain the Australian system, how it is used, its strengths and weaknesses and what the implementation problems are, etc.

After the initial introduction to the Aussie system, we will have three experienced local sports leaders looking at three important areas of the proposed rating system. OCM Vice-President, Dato' Roy Rajasingham will look at elements of governance while Datuk Haji Naim b. Datuk Haji Mohamad from the Malaysian National Cycling Federation will look at elements of competitions, programmes and activities that could be used to rate sports bodies. Finally, Dato' Sieh Kok Chi will introduce some criteria on achievements and performance not only for athletes but also for officials. The speakers may also give you ideas on how marks could be allocated for each criteria or indicator.

Armed with these ideas you will break out into workshops where you will identify and prioritise a list of criteria and performance indicators and translate them into questionnaires. These will then be piloted, refined and developed into the rating system that we are looking forward to.

Looking around the hall and seeing the participants who are here today, I expect the proceedings, especially during the break-out session, to be interesting and lively. I certainly want to come round and catch some of the excitement and debate.

Finally, let me say that this system which we want to formulate is not “yours” or “theirs” – it’s “ours”. It is something that we want because we want to move forward. We want to progress. We want our own association, our own athletes and our own officials to start moving up. Continuous improvement is what we must all be striving for.

I wish all of you a happy and fruitful day.

Thank you.